

U.S. Labor Secretary, Sen. Coons Join Secretary Gilliam-Johnson to Tour Wilmington Apprenticeship Program

Roundtables to discuss Delaware's progress coincide with announcement of funding won by Markell Administration

Wilmington, DE – U.S. Department of Labor Secretary Thomas E. Perez, U.S. Sen Tom Carper, U.S. Sen. Chris Coons and Delaware DOL Secretary Patrice Gilliam-Johnson met in Wilmington on Oct. 3 to tour local Apprenticeship and Training operations and participate in two roundtables to discuss the program's progress.

The visit coincides with a recent announcement by the U.S. Department of Labor that Delaware has received a \$200,000 federal grant to expand its Apprenticeship and Training operation by integrating the program into local education and workforce systems, engaging industry and other partners to expand apprenticeship to new sectors and new populations and expanding outreach with employers to offer new apprenticeship opportunities.

This work builds on efforts spearheaded by Governor Markell's Administration that provide better pipelines to good jobs, including the TechHire initiative that has more than doubled participants incomes by giving them IT training, as well as the Pathways to Prosperity program, through which 6,000 high school students are on track to graduate with college credit and workplace experience in high-demand fields.

"We're really excited about the strides we continue to make with our apprenticeship and training program in Delaware," said Secretary Gilliam-Johnson. "We have seen the value of

investments in high-quality workforce training through the success of Delawareans who have participated. And thanks to this grant and the support we've received from Senator Coons, Senator Carper, Congressman Carney and U.S. Labor Secretary Perez, we're able to do even more to create employment opportunities for hard-working Delawareans."

According to USDOL statistics, 87 percent of apprentices are employed after completing their programs, with an average starting wage above \$50,000 per year. The return on investment for employers is substantial, as studies indicate that for every dollar spent on apprenticeship, employers receive an average of \$1.47 return in increased productivity, reduced waste and greater front-line innovation.

In Delaware the program has produced graduates since the mid 1970's and currently has nearly 1,100 active registered apprentices in 23 different occupations. There are some 300 active sponsors or employers for these, with the largest numbers stemming from the electrician, plumbing and HVAC trades.

"Enhancing our apprenticeship offerings is one of the best ways to strengthen the quality of our workforce over the long term," said Governor Markell. "This effort, combined with others like Pathways to Prosperity and TechHire, are helping to ensure Delaware remains competitive in the new economy and that we build on the progress that has led to the best job growth in the region. I welcome Secretary Perez to Delaware today and thank him and our congressional delegation for their support for these programs."

The majority of apprenticeships are four years in length, with the participants receiving 8,000 hours of paid on-the-job training. For each year of training, a minimum of 144 hours of related instruction is required. Upon completion of the required on-the-job training and related instruction, the apprentice is eligible for "journey papers." A journeyperson

is nationally recognized as having a well-rounded ability in all phases of his or her trade.

Schedule of events

Apprenticeship Tour and Roundtable

What: Secretary Perez, will participate in an apprenticeship roundtable with Senator Carper, Senator Coons, Delaware Secretary of Labor Gilliam-Johnson, elected officials, community leaders and Apprenticeship program participants.

When: 10–11:30 am

Where: [RC Fabrication](#), 824 Locust Street, Wilmington, DE 19801

Tech Hire Tour

What: Secretary Perez, Sen. Coons, Delaware Secretary of Labor Gilliam-Johnson, and business and community leaders will participate in a tour of Zip Code. They also will take part in a coding competition where they are put different teams of students competing against each other's coding abilities.

When: 11:45am – 12:00pm

Where: [Zip Code](#), 1105 N. Market Street, 3rd Floor, Wilmington, DE 19801

APPRENTICESHIP AND TRAINING WEEK

President Barack Obama proclaimed the week of November 2, 2015, as the first Annual National Apprenticeship Week. This year, the second Annual National Apprenticeship Week will take place November 14-20, 2016 NAW offers Registered Apprenticeship Sponsors the opportunity to showcase their programs, facilities, and apprentices, and gives Employers,

Education, Industry Associations, Labor, Elected officials and other critical partners the opportunity to highlight how Registered Apprenticeship meets their needs for a skilled workforce.

Here's video of Senator Coons highlighting Delaware Apprenticeship programs to mark National Apprenticeship Week:

<https://youtu.be/xDtau3ZlqD0>

ABOUT THE DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

The Delaware Department of Labor connects people to jobs, resources, monetary benefits, workplace protections and labor market information to promote financial independence, workplace justice and a strong economy. The department is made up of five divisions:

[Division of Employment & Training](#)

[Division of Unemployment Insurance](#)

[Division of Industrial Affairs](#)

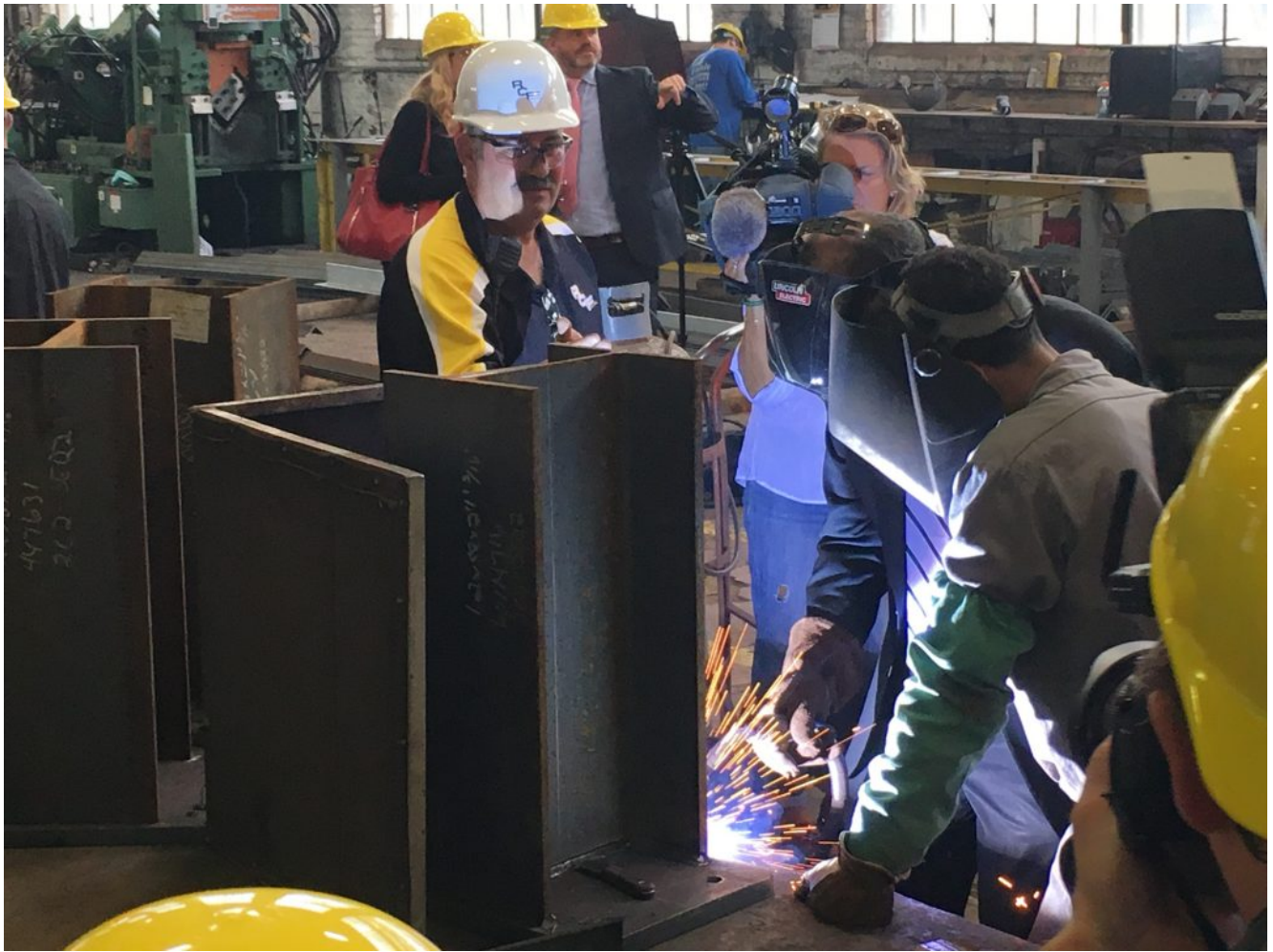
[Division of Vocational Rehabilitation](#)

[Office of Occupational and Labor Market Information](#)

The combined efforts of these divisions and offices support the employment-related needs of nearly 400,000 Delaware workers and more than 20,000 businesses throughout the state.



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U.S. DOL Perez tries his hand at welding at R.C. Fabricators in Wilmington. R.C. Fabricators Inc. , which employs several of DDOL's apprentices , fabricates and erects structural steel and miscellaneous metals for the construction industry.





